

# Should I Get a Flu Shot?



**Myth:** “The flu isn’t a serious disease.”

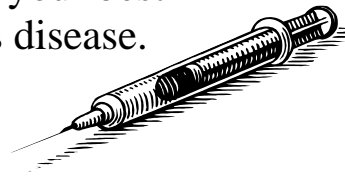
**Fact:** ⇒ Influenza (flu) *is* a serious disease of the nose, throat, and lungs that can lead to pneumonia.  
⇒ Each year about 200,000 people in the U.S. are hospitalized and about 36,000 die because of the flu.

**Myth:** “The flu shot can cause the flu.”

**Fact:** The flu shot *cannot* cause the flu. Most people who get the flu afterward were actually exposed to the flu before the shot without realizing it.

**Myth:** “The flu shot does not work.”

**Fact:** Flu shots are *70-90% effective* in preventing the flu or at least reducing the symptoms. Getting the vaccine is your best protection against this disease.



**Who should get a flu shot?**

- ⇒ People age 65 or older.
- ⇒ People who frequently spend time in crowded situations (shelters, bus...)
- ⇒ People who reside in a nursing home or chronic care facility.
- ⇒ People who have chronic health conditions.
- ⇒ People with depressed immune systems (diabetes, AIDS/HIV, TB, chemotherapy)
- ⇒ Pregnant women in 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> trimester.
- ⇒ *People who work or spend time with others who are at high risk for flu!*

**Who should NOT get a flu shot?**

- ⇒ People with a severe allergy to chicken eggs.
- ⇒ People with a severe reaction to a past flu shot.
- ⇒ People who developed Guillain-Barré syndrome (GBS) within 6 weeks of a previous flu shot.
- ⇒ Children less than 6 months old.
- ⇒ If you have a fever, wait until your symptoms lessen to get the flu shot.